842 of the economic hardship incurred as a result of large families. A few
[843] of the more outspoken mothers complain bitterly against the old peo-
[593] ple who expect them to continue bearing children until three male heirs are born. Men desire male heirs, and one son is not enough: the favored number is three. Informal interviews reveal that in spite of the cultural preference for sons, mothers welcome daughters, who grow up to be useful helpers. Even if women protest when they feel tired of bearing children, they submit to their husband's demands. Since Japa-
551 nese given names are used today, the practice of naming a girl Sueko
553 (end child), to indicate that one considers her to be the last, is often
842 resorted to. If this proves insufficient and another follows, she might
[177] be called Tomeko (stop child). In one family the wife gave her baby girl the name Sueko to indicate that she did not desire any more children. Her husband, however, disagreed, for he wanted another son, and registered the child without his wife's knowledge under another name.

842 Although the older generation, which has supported large families,
744 looks on birth control measures with distaste, the young mothers circulate information published in Japanese magazines and by the Okinawan public health department on this matter, and a few families actually use contraceptives. However, in general, public health nurses
847 have found it extremely difficult to discuss matters like birth control, abortion, and infanticide with villagers. "We suspect that these measures are practiced everywhere. Of course, with the system of registration and public health nursing, infanticide is hardly possible; however . . . we could not say. . . ." • It is interesting to note that in
[732] Taira there are mental defectives but no physical defectives. Abortion
[848] is legal with a doctor's consent, but informants claimed it was not practiced. There are illegitimate children born in the village.

842 "The seeds, they must match. If they do not match, then it cannot be." explain the villagers. They continue, "It is like planting a field, however; if the soil is hostile to growth, nothing can happen." Thus the villagers express their theories of conception.

843 Cessation of menstrual periods signals the start of pregnancy, and the sudden craving for a particular kind of food forces the woman to acknowledge the fact. Informal interviewing and casual observation
[461] reveal that morning sickness is not usual. Women rarely miss a work-
[522] ing day in the fields and mountains even in the early stages of pregnancy. One male who failed to appear for work with the rest of the male population of the village was the butt of many a joke. "How now, you are taking over the task of your wife?" teased the men and women.

[164] Malfunction of the kidneys is not uncommon among pregnant

• Personal communication from public health nurses.

843 be drawn into the tomb. Some say the prospective father should also avoid these situations. Another set of observances has an easy delivery as its aim. The woman is urged to work hard and not to overeat so that the unborn child may not become too large. During the fifth month a "belly band" is wrapped tightly about her for the same purpose, especially to keep the head small.

A woman neither hides her pregnancy nor displays it unnecessarily--- if she is married and it is her husband's child. If this is not the case she may attempt to hide the fact. On the other hand if she is bearing what may be her husband's first son , she may be very pleased at the prospect, but she does not go out of her way to show it.

843 774 [847] No clear statement was given to the effect that the "soul" enters the body of the unborn child at a particular time, but statements are made about dangers to the shii of the child. One informant suggested that this soul-like entity enters the body of the mother during the third month and that for this reason a moxibustionist had refused to abort a woman after her third month had passed.

847 Abortion Abortions have always been and continue to be performed on Okinawa. The most frequent reason is said to be the desire not to bear an illegitimate child. An old-fashioned home method is to brew camphor-wood leaves and drink the brew or to burn the leaves and breathe the smoke. Experts in cautery are also believed to be able to cause an abortion by burning moxa on the proper areas of the body. But at the present time women are said to be aborted more frequently by midwives. The practice does not appear to be regarded as illegal.

844 Birth A woman tries to work up until the time of childbirth. If she has had several children already she knows when labor starts, how long it is likely to last, and may go out to the fields confident that she can return in time. Delivery is in the kucha, the back room of the house. Women of the family are present and men are not forbidden, though children are sent out. Often a woman's husband grasps her during delivery. Formerly she squatted on the floor holding a rope suspended from a house-beam above her. At present she is usually made to lie down. The labor is spoken of as "pain" but the woman must not cry out; she may only grunt when putting her strength into the ejection of the baby. If she were to cry out because of the pain she would later feel very ashamed---"because it is something that happens to every woman; people would talk about her."

853 Formerly the newly-born child was neither bathed nor dressed but simply wrapped in an old kimono; now it is bathed in boiled water and dressed. The infant is permitted to nurse from about the fourth day on, after there is milk in the mother's breasts. Before this it may be given a little sugar in water and possibly allowed to suck a little colostrum about the second day after birth.

178 846 [359] Formerly the mother was kept in the kucha for about a week in front of a fire burning on the jiiru, an open hearth in country homes, a kind of brazier in the city.

brazier in the city. She was kept warm continuously, even in hot weather, so that, it is said, women often broke out in skin eruptions from the heat. At present younger women are not following this practice and many regard it as a foolish custom. The absence of jiiru in post-war houses may be a factor in the decline of the custom.

Post-natal Observances During the first year of life the child is the center of several ceremonies. They are in brief:

1) Mbagii sunji, "Red rice ceremony". Held on the day of birth. Relatives, friends, and neighbors come. Rice dyed red and a soup of taro stems (a symbol of many children) are offered to the ancestral tablets and served to the guests. The afterbirth is buried behind the house while the children are made to laugh so that the baby will have a good disposition.

2) Naajiki, "Naming". Held during the first week. Practices vary. In one variety the baby's grandmother releases a crab and a grasshopper and shoots an arrow at a winnowing tray; in another she divines with rice grains to see if the name she has selected is proper. This rite was formerly held to give the baby its native Okinawan name.

3) Mansang, "Full birth". Held on the 7th or 30th day after the birth to celebrate the full term. A feast is served to relative, friends, and neighbors.

4) Naa'njii, "First going out". Held for a boy on the first day of the ten-day cycle, designated as kanii, on the second kanii day for a girl. The baby's grandmother makes it pray to the ancestral tablets and to the oven god, then marks its forehead with soot and takes it out, formerly to pray to the god of the pigsty-privy.

5) Hachi-atchii, "First walking". Held whenever the mother is first able to go to visit her parents and siblings. She takes gifts of food to them and in return they give money to the baby.

6) Tanka, "Birthday". Held on the first anniversary of the birth. A feast is prepared and many relatives and friends come bringing gifts of money. The child's future career is divined by placing a number of objects in front of it---money, a book, an abacus, food, etc. If the child chooses the money he will be rich; if the book, a scholar; if the food, a glutton; and so forth. The odds are usually weighted in favor of a desirable future.

There seems to be some variation in all of these practices. Several may be obsolescent because some of the elements entering into them are no longer in use, the pigsty-privy and the native names, for example.

Infanticide New-born babies may be done away with if they are not wanted, but this is probably not at all common under ordinary circumstances. One example was recorded: An old woman who died recently lay for about a week on her death bed unable to talk. Her children gathered about her, wondering if some sin ('tsumi') were not in need of atonement ('tsugunai').

847 783 Finally one of her brothers told them the reason. When she had been a young woman her husband had been away for a long period during which she had had relations with other men and had had a baby by one of them. To avoid the disgrace and the anger of her husband, the woman's mother had buried the child alive in the back yard. The story was known to other older members of the family because some time later the bones had been discovered. When the story was told to the children, they told their dying mother that she could now go peacefully. She died soon after. All agreed that if a tablet had been made for the dead infant and incense had been burned, even in secret, the mother would not have suffered when she died. Infanticide thus may be punished by the supernatural, but then the punishment may also be avoided by the proper offerings.

847 Lebra reports that birth statistics from the village of Kitazato suggest that female infanticide has been practiced there recently. Statistics from other communities studied do not give the same skewed sex ration.

853 854 Infant Care Okinawan mothers nurse their babies for a year to a year and a half, though some are said to continue even until the child is three. They keep no schedules but give their babies the breast whenever they seem to want it. They deliberately offer a fretful baby the breast not only to appease its hunger but also to comfort it and it is not unusual to see a grandmother offer her dry breast to a child as a pacifier. I once commented to two Okinawan women that a certain American doctor has argued that Okinawans are happier than Americans because they are breast-fed as infants rather than bottle-fed; the women answered immediately, "But it's not the milk; it's the love ('aijō')."

853 Infants receive no food other than milk for the first nine months. Then they are given a little gruel made by skimming off the top of a mixture of cooked rice and water. This is not given earlier because it is believed that milk and rice do not mix well in the infant's stomach. After the child's first birthday it is given most adult foods, unless it is especially weak. Most children will not eat everything, however, but, it is said, will prefer sweet foods and avoid highly seasoned foods. Mothers do not prechew food for small children as a rule but may do so in some cases, to take the bones out of fish, for example.

843 [548] Toilet training is neither early nor strict. Adults as a rule defecate only in the toilet but are likely to urinate almost anywhere. They do not expect small children to be very careful. A baby wears a diaper until it is a year or a year and a half; then it may wear only a dress or shirt with no pants. At first the mother holds it over the toilet or merely off the edge of the house. In time it is expected to go to the toilet itself to defecate. Children are said to go by themselves when they are three. I have seen children of four still defecating beside the house, too busy playing to go to the toilet. They were scolded for it but received no more severe punishment. [178] This was in the city, however, and I was told that while their mothers did not object much to this behavior, their grandmother objected more strongly and scolded their mothers for permitting it. The change in type of toilet may

[Kochinda-son]

163 The prewar birthrate figures for Okinawa-ken include the following: 1936--26.2; 1937--26.4; and 1938--27.2.[1] So it is evident that in the prewar period there was a slight tendency for the birth rate to increase. A decrease is noted for recent years. In 1951 the birth rate was 36.7 for the Ryukyus as a whole, and was 34.2 in 1952.[2]

A more nearly accurate measure of the rapidity of the increase in population is the fertility ratio. For this study it was defined as the ratio of children under five years of age to the number of women aged fifteen to forty inclusive. The fertility ratio in 1953 for Kochinda-son was [171] 663. This may be compared to the United States average of 464 for the white rural-farm population in 1940, or the average of 587 for the Negro rural-farm population in the same year. The 1947 fertility ratio in Japan was 528.[3]

842 [m] Most Okinawan men are familiar with the condom method of preventing conception. The Japanese Army was said to have followed a policy of distributing packages as men left the posts for liberty. A brand called "Shikishima" could also be bought at drug stores. One farmer asked me if there was a shot in the arm that a woman could get so as to render her sterile for a two-week period.

• 847 Informants stated that abortions were sometimes performed before the war, but were rare. Postwar doctors are not supposed to perform abortions unless the husband consents in person.

163 178 Spacing of Births By an analysis of the period between births, it may be possible to learn of shifts in frequency of births. For this purpose, a sampling was made of families with complete birth records in 25% of the households of Kochinda-son. The same villages were checked for postwar birth records. Only families with three or more postwar births were included in the latter category. Families with complete birth records covering both the pre- and post-invasion periods were also checked.

The comparison between the 37 households representing complete prewar records and the 39 households representing the postwar records of three or more births can best be seen by examining the following table:

Table IX

	Prewar	Postwar
Average Age of Mother at Birth of First Child	23.1	22.4
Average Age of Father at Birth of First Child	29.6[4]	27.1[5]

1 Navy Civil Affairs Handbook, page 56.
2 CAARI, p. 76. Projected annual rates per 1,000 inhabitants based upon estimated midyear population.
3 Japan Statistical Yearbook, 1950, p. 17. The population figures used are valid for 1 October 1947.
4 The ages of only nine prewar fathers were available. The remainder were war dead, and were not recorded in the temporary 'koseki'.
5 All 39 cases are represented above.

511 [Kitazato]
621 the houses are the same small, poorly-built structures of thatch and scrap
735 lumber that are found on the beach. By way of contrast, the house which
[342] the author rented in Kanegusuku was the poorest and shabbiest in that vil-
[184] lage; yet, the same house in Kitazato would easily have been the best.
Shabby appearances are not limited to houses, for the people too are more
poorly dressed than elsewhere on Okinawa.

621 Food Nearly everywhere on Okinawa the authors heard that the peo-
511 ple are eating better today than before the war; such is not the case for
262 Kitazato, and the villagers are most emphatic about this. Potatoes, beans,
and other vegetable products form the mainstay of their diet; often times,
they say, potatoes are dug up before they are fully mature, so great is the
pressure for food. It is the opinion of the local agricultural office that
the people are slowly starving to death, and the villagers state that they
are always hungry. The local storekeepers say that the people do not have
enough money to buy canned foods to supplement their diet. Though Hama is
[226] virtually on the water the villagers do no fishing since the occupation is
regarded as a foreign one; however, some shell fish are collected by the
women.

621 Exodus of Youth One of the marked features of the village is the
511 general absence of young men and women in the fifteen to twenty-five age
166 group, for as soon as the student completes junior high school, he or she
heads for the city seeking employment. A number of the families in the vil-
lage are said to subsist mainly on the money which their children send back.
According to the mayor 61 families have left the village since the end of
the war; he feels that if they had not left, things would be much worse.
Most of those who left were families containing grown children who could
work; the parents in some cases were reluctant to leave, but their children
were anxious to leave. A slight decline in military employment in early
1954 resulted in several of these families' returning to the village, and
the mayor was apprehensive lest more return.

621 One characteristic of the population of this village which struck
847 the author was the disproportionate number of females to males in the age
group under five years. In this group there were 64 males and 33 females,
whereas the groups above were more nearly proportionate. Female infanti-
cide has been a common occurrence during times of famine or under conditions
of extreme poverty in Japan and China, and the authors heard several stories
giving some evidence of it on Okinawa. No factual evidence of any sort was
gathered by the author in Kitazato to corroborate this interpretation of
the statistics; however, the fact that the permanent resettlement of the
village in its present locations took place approximately six years ago in
1948 may lend some credence to this interpretation.

62 Attitude toward Americans The villagers' initial reaction to the
829 presence of the author in the village was one of fear and veiled hostility.
Gradually this was overcome, and good rapport was established. During one
[123] of his last visits to the community the author was told, "The first day you
were in the village everyone wondered if the military were going to make us
move again. No one slept that night." At the same time the villagers are